Vol. VII. Numb. 65

THE OBSERVATOR.

Remarks on Count Fourbin's *ſailing* Northward *with a Squadron. On a Project to ſpoil the* French *Harbours in the narrow Seas. On her Majeſty's Proclamation againſt the intruding Clergy in* Scotland. *The Proceedings of the Government againſt the nonjurant Clergy, juſtify'd by the* Rehearſer's *own Argument. The* Rehearſer *and his Party, Rebels to the State, and Schiſmaticks from the Church.* Deut. 17. *and the Revolt of the ten Tribes, vindicated from the* Rehearſer's *falſe and blaſphemous Gloſſes.*

From Saturday, September 25. to Wednesday, September 29. 1708.

Obſ. WHAT News from *Flanders, Roger?*

Country-m. Nothing freſh, Maſter, only a Confirmation of our Victory over the *French*, who attack'd our Convoy from *Oſtend*; that we beat them from *Oudenburgh*, and made the Reinforcement they deſign'd for *Liſle*, come ſhort.

Obſ. Is there nothing of *Fourbin*'s ſailing *Northward* from *Dunkirk*, with Forces on Board?

Country-m. Yes, Maſter, the *Dutch* Prints do mention ſome ſuch Thing; and I have heard Gentlemen ſay, that perhaps they are bound for *Scotland*, to ſupport the *Rehearſer*'s Brethren, the *Jacobite* Clergy, who intrude into Churches there, and ſet up nonjurant Conventicles; againſt whom her Majeſty has lately iſſu'd a moſt gracious Proclamation, which the Factions call Perſecution.

Obſ. I know they do, *Roger*, but very unjuſtly, as may eaſily be prov'd from their own Principles.

Country-m. Pray let me underſtand that, Maſter? For I have ſeen ſome of our Clergy-men with broad Hats, little Bands, and fluttering Scarfs, give themſelves the Airs of Hectors; and while ſipping their Ninny-broth at Coffee-houſes that I could name, I have heard them talk very dogmatically on that Head; bewail the Sufferings of their Brethren in *Scotland*; and alledge, in the Language of the *Rehearſer*, that the Church was in very great Danger, and could never be otherwiſe, ſo long as Schiſm was eſtabliſh'd in *Scotland* under the Notion of a Church, which they deny'd the Presbyterians of *Scotland* to be.

Obſ. I'll furniſh you with an Anſwer to them anon, *Roger*; but muſt firſt tell you what I have heard ſome Gentlemen ſay too, *viz.* That they wonder why the Propoſal of ſpoiling the *French* Harbours in the *Channel*, or narrow Seas, has never been try'd; for if it ſucceeded, it might ſecure us againſt the Sallies of the *French* from *Dunkirk*, *St. Maloes*, *Breſt*, &c. to annoy our Trade, or invade our Coaſts.

Country-m. Pray what is that, Maſter?

Obſ. Why, *Roger*, they ſay, the Experiment might ſoon be try'd; for the Entrances into thoſe Harbours are narrow, and not very good for Ships of a large Size at beſt; therefore they ſay, that if a Squadron of Men of War were ſent with old large Ships full of great Stones, join'd together with Iron-Bars, faſten'd in thoſe Stones by Lead, and ſunk in the Mouths of thoſe Harbours at once, it would effectually ſtop them, and in a little Time would be ſo cemented by the Sand left there by every Tide, that the *French* could no more weigh them up, than ſo many Rocks; which would make thoſe Harbours impracticable by large Ships, and for their ſmall Craft, they could do us no great Hurt; a few Privateers would be ſufficient to curb them.

Country-m. Aye, Maſter; but who can think, that thoſe who are rather for expoſing the Complaints, than for redreſſing the Grievances of our Merchants, as the Lords have alledg'd againſt ſome People within a Mile of an Oak, will have any Regard to ſuch Propoſals? Or what Reaſon have we to expect, that while their Lordſhips Addreſſes relating to our Naval Affairs, and the Articles of War enacted by Parliament, are neglected, and her Majeſty's Orders are not obey'd, that any Thing proceeding from a leſſer Authority, ſhould be minded? For my part, I can ſee no Hopes of any ſuch Thing, ſo long as Places are bought and ſold contrary to her Majeſty's Proclamation, and until thoſe Corruptions in Offices and Officers, ſo loudly complain'd of by the Lord Biſhop of *St. Aſaph*, in his Sermon before the Queen, be remov'd. But we muſt leave all thoſe Things to be enquir'd into by our Superiors, Maſter. In the mean Time, pray give me an Anſwer to the Charge of Perſecution upon the nonjurant Clergy in *Scotland*, of which the *Rehearſer* and his Faction, make ſuch an Outcry.

Obſ. I hope, *Roger*, all honeſt Men of the Church of *England*, many of whom were abus'd by Miſrepreſentations before, will now believe that the diſorderly and ſeditious Practices of the nonjurant Clergy in *Scotland*, were the true Cauſe of any Trouble they met with there, when they ſee their illegal Intruſions into Churches and dwelling Houſes, appointed for the regular Clergy, taken Notice of in her Majeſty's Proclamation; and according to the *Rehearſal*'s own Principles, in his Paper, Numb. 246. her Majeſty, and thoſe under her in *Scotland*, are oblig'd to do what they have done againſt the nonjurant Clergy there. His Words are, 'If the Magiſtrate think the Grounds of Se-'paration are not good, and not equivalent to the 'great Miſchiefs of Separation, not only to the 'Souls of Men, but of moſt dangerous Conſe-'quence to the State; whether he may not think, 'that he who beareth not the Sword of God in 'vain, is oblig'd to controul this Plea of Conſci-'ence, for Example to others, and the Preſervati-'on of the publick Peace? For we cannot deny Li-'berty of Conſcience to Kings and States, when 'we aſſert it as the Right of every Man.

Country-m. I remember you took Notice of this, Maſter, in yours of *Octob.* 1. 1707. Vol. VI. Number 61.

Obſ. Yes, *Roger*, I did, and turn'd it upon the *Rehearſer* and his Party, thus: That according to this Doctrine, he and his Party ought no more to oppoſe and write againſt the Toleration; for the Queen, our ſupreme Magiſtrate, has declar'd her Satisfaction with it, and promis'd inviolably to maintain it. And ſince her Majeſty acts thus, *Roger*, according to her own Conſcience, the *Rehearſer*, if he be true to his own Doctrine, muſt allow her Majeſty that Liberty. At the ſame time, *Roger*, I brought it more cloſe to the *Rehearſer* and his Party, thus; 'Her Majeſty cannot think the 'Grounds for Separation from the Church of *Eng-'land* by the Nonjurors, to be good, nor equiva-'lent to the great Miſchiefs of it, not only to the 'Souls of Men, but to the dangerous Conſequences 'it may have to the State, ſince they diſown her 'Majeſty's Title. Therefore, by the *Rehearſer*'s 'own Arguments, her Majeſty is oblig'd by her

Sword

'Sword, to controul their Plea of Conſcience, for 'an Example to others, and the Preſervation of 'the publick Peace. And I enforc'd this from the Writings of their Champion Mr. *Dodwell*, who teaches, that there's no Salvation in the Communion of thoſe Biſhops of our Church, who came in Place of ſuch as were lay'd aſide by Act of Parliament, (wherein the Biſhops in the Houſe of Lords concurr'd) for their refuſing to ſwear Allegiance to the Government. To this I have ſeveral times demanded an Anſwer, but the *Rehearſer* never yet thought fit to give me one; and I now call upon him again for an Anſwer, or to acknowledge, that his Argument was falſe.

Country-m. You have given him many Choak-pears, Maſter, and this is one among the reſt; but what do you ſay to him and his Party for denying the Church of *Scotland* to be a Church? In which Charge are included all thoſe reform'd Churches Abroad, that have not Epiſcopacy.

Obſ. All that I ſhall ſay to them at preſent, *Roger*, is, that they are Rebels to the State, by aſſerting, that the Queen and Parliament have, by eſtabliſhing Presbytery in *Scotland*, and the Toleration in *England*, enacted a Rebellion againſt God, like that of *Korah*; and that they are Schiſmaticks from the Church of *England*, who, in her 55th Canon, enjoins Preachers, before their Sermons, '*To pray for* '*Chriſt's holy Catholick Church*; *that is, for the whole* '*Congregation of Chriſtian People diſpers'd throughout the* '*World, and eſpecially for the Churches of* England, 'Scotland, *and* Ireland. Now, *Roger*, every Body knows the Church of *Scotland* had no Biſhops then, for Presbytery was eſtabliſh'd there in 1592 by Act of Parliament, as at preſent, and Biſhops were not eſtabliſh'd again there 'till 1606. So that 'tis not the Church of *England* that countenances ſuch Narrow and Schiſmatical Principles, as to unchurch all thoſe who have not Biſhops, but only the *Laudean* Faction, who, ever ſince their Riſe, have been Incendiaries both in Church and State, and continue ſtill to favour Popery and Slavery.

Country-m. That's another Choak-pear for the *Rehearſer*, Maſter: But what d'ye ſay to his making the 17th of *Deuteronomy*, which you have quoted, as the Original Contract, appointed by God himſelf, betwixt the People of *Iſrael*, and their Kings, a Prophecy, and the Revolt of the ten Tribes, a Rebellion?

Obſ. I ſay, *Roger*, that 'tis the moſt impudent perverting of the Text, that ever was heard of ſince the Devil perverted the Sacred Oracles, when he tempted our Saviour in the Wilderneſs; for to every Man of common Senſe, that Chapter, from v. 14, to the End, will appear to be a plain Declaration of the Duty of a King, and the Rules by which he was to govern. 'Tis expreſsly, v. 19. call'd a Law and Statute; the Original of which, with the other Laws given to that People in *Deuteronomy*, was appointed by God himſelf, to be put into the Side of the Ark of the Covenant, for a Witneſs againſt them, *Deut.* 32. 26, 27. ſo that the *Rehearſer* may, juſt with as much Senſe and Truth, call the moral, ceremonial, and judicial Law, given to that People in *Exodus*, *Leviticus*, and *Deuteronomy*, a Prophecy. Such miſerable Shifts is he put to, for the Support of a wretched Cauſe, that he expoſes himſelf to the Laughter of all thoſe who are able to read the Bible, and to the juſt Hatred of all thoſe who have a due Regard to it.

Then as to his calling the Revolt of the ten Tribes, a Rebellion, becauſe 'tis ſaid, 1 *Kings* 12. that *Iſrael rebell'd* againſt the Houſe of *David* to this Day, had there been the leaſt Honeſty in him, he would have taken Notice of the various Reading in the Margin; where the Tranſlators, who every Body knows, were Church of *England*-men, put the Word *fell away*, inſtead of *rebell'd*; which muſt be granted to be more agreeable to the Nature of the Thing, and to the Context, than the Word *rebell'd* in the modern Senſe; for there was no taking of Arms in the Caſe by the *Iſraelites*, but a plain Revolt and Renounciation of their Allegiance to *Rehoboam*; which God takes upon himſelf as his own Act, v. 15. where he ſays, *The Cauſe was from him*; and v. 24. when *Rehoboam* would have been for reducing them by Arms, God expreſsly forbids him, and ſaid, *This Thing is from me*: And 2 *Kings* 17. 21. 'tis again ſaid, *That God rent* Iſrael *from the Houſe of* David. So that however the *Rehearſer* and his Faction may prophanely laugh at it, the juſtifying Cauſe why God and the People did ſo, is plainly aſſign'd, *viz.* That whereas *Solomon* had tranſgreſs'd the Law of the Kingdom, or Original Contract, in *Deut.* 17. in many Inſtances, and particularly by multiplying Wives and Horſes, *&c.* *Rehoboam* was ſo far from offering to redreſs thoſe Grievances, tho' demanded by the People, that he threaten'd 'em with a much heavier Oppreſſion; therefore God approv'd their Revolt, of which *Rehoboam*, and his Tory Counſellors, gave the criminal Cauſe themſelves; for whatever the *Rehearſer* and his Faction may do, every Body elſe will abhor the Thoughts of making God the Author and Approver of Rebellion; which differs as much from a lawful Revolt, as Hell does from Heaven.

I ſhall add no more at preſent, *Roger*; but ſince the *Rehearſer* makes ſo bold with the Scripture, we are not to wonder he ſhould do the like with our Revolution, and impudently deny that it was founded upon the coercive Power, and reaſſerted it, tho' it be plain from the Debates betwixt the Lords and Commons, printed in 1695, that it was ſo; which, together with the kind Letters ſent me by ſeveral Gentlemen on that Head, I hope we ſhall have Occaſion to ſet in a full and clear Light in a little Time.

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